

Dan Vassallo Named USATF-New England Athlete of the Month for November



BOSTON – **Dan Vassallo**, age 25, of Wilmington, MA, has been named USA Track & Field – New England’s Athlete of the Month for November 2010. On November 21, Vassallo, who competes for adidas New England Running Club, won the 17th Philadelphia Marathon. His winning time of 2:21:28 was a personal best and placed him more than two minutes ahead of runner up David Bedoya of Somerville, making for an unusual 1-2 Massachusetts finish. The Philadelphia Marathon drew a record field of more than 11,000 runners and was contested in runner-friendly conditions, with bright sunshine and temperatures in the 40s.

Vassallo, who had hernia surgery in July, showed his strength early and by mile 8 had established a cleared lead. His lead steadily lengthened and by mile 18, as he reached the suburb of Manayunk, felt that he had “very strong control of the field.” He described feeling “overcome with emotion” in the closing miles, especially in the last few hundred yards, when the “Chariots of Fire” theme was played and the race announcer called out his name. He described his victory as; “the biggest win of my career.”

Dan graduated from Wilmington High School in 2003, then attended Colby College in Maine, graduating in 2007. At Colby, he won numerous honors in track and set a school record for the 10,000 meters (30:52.79). In October, 2007, he ran the Maine Marathon, his first attempt at the distance, and won in 2:26.50. At the 2008 Boston Marathon, Vassallo showed continued progress, finishing as 7th American and 24th overall in a time of 2:25:10. A week shy of 23, Dan was the youngest finisher among the top 25 at Boston.

Looking to the future, Vassallo is very focused on achieving a qualifying mark for the 2012 U.S. Olympic Men’s Marathon Trials. He can qualify by running 2:19:00 for a marathon or 1:05:00 for a half-marathon. With good health and hard training, Dan believes that these marks are well within his reach.